

Minutes
Pro Parks Levy Oversight Committee
February 28, 2005
Opportunity Fund Open House held at the Golden Gardens Bathhouse

Members Present: Adrian Moroles, Joyce Moty, Maisha Barnett, Peter Lukevich, Cheryl Klinker, Terry Holme, Susan Casey, Doug Dunham, Sharon Lee, Keith Rickards, Jeff Hou.

Staff: Michael Shiosaki, Cathy Tuttle, Donald Harris, Catherine Anstett, Bill Blair, Susan Golub

Opportunity Fund Open House: The meeting began with a forty five minute open house. Committee members toured the room, observing the project boards displayed by Opportunity Fund applicants from the north and central east communities (Projects 1 through 18).

Committee Business

The meeting was called to order by Doug Dunham and the minutes from the January 24, 2005 meeting were approved. Michael Shiosaki welcomed citizens to the meeting and gave a brief history of the Golden Gardens Bathhouse, a Pro Parks Levy project.

Opportunity Fund Projects - Public Comments

Citizen presentations proceeded in the number order of the projects.

1. 33rd Avenue - Lake City, Nancy Keith: The property is owned by the Seattle Housing Authority, which is planning to build a 50 household project. The proposal is for the Opportunity Fund to purchase 15,000 square feet of the SHA property to build a public park. Without the public park SHA will totally build out their property. This area will incur significant change in the next several years – what now looks like a quiet neighborhood will be developed with 6-8 story buildings.

2. Wedgwood Pocket Park, Brian Swanson: The request is for the Opportunity Fund to purchase an unused City Light substation. The request is not for the whole lot, but just for half, leaving half in its current retail use. Although this property is not in an urban village or neighborhood revitalization area, it has a very low amount of park space – the area has been penalized because it is not a neighborhood planning sector.

3. Maple Leaf Community Garden, Barbara Maxwell: The goal of this project is to bring the neighborhood together. There are single family, apartment and day workers in the neighborhood – the project will bring them together at a garden site. The property was acquired during the first round of the Opportunity Fund. Since its purchase a master plan has been developed and the neighborhood has received two Small and Simple Neighborhood Matching Fund grants. They are ready to begin development of construction documents.

4. Pinehurst Pocket Park, Erica Peterson: This project will develop a sunny space for community gathering, kids playing and art. The property was acquired during the first round of the Opportunity Fund. Since then, there has been lots of neighborhood support. The community received a Small and Simple Neighborhood Matching Fund grant for park design. This project meets the goals of the Lake City Comprehensive Plan.

5. Ernst Park Addition, Chip Nevins: There has been rapid change in Fremont with development of apartments and office buildings in the heart of downtown Fremont. Ernst Park was bought and developed by the City; it is a great park with a great open feeling -- but the park is not finished. The original plan was to include the parcel to the west of the park, but the property was never available. It is available now. The time is now to get the lot and incorporate it into the park. The lot protects the park – it will be developed if it is not bought.

6. Ballard Future Park, Davidya Kasperzyk: The Ballard open space inventory led to an open space plan. There is no place to develop parks in Ballard. This request is for development money to develop property that is being acquired through the first round of the Opportunity Fund. This will match development funding with acquisition money already set aside.

7. Fremont Peak Park, Jack Tomkinson: Thank you to Parks for acquiring this site during the first round of the Opportunity Fund. There is lots of multi-family building occurring in this neighborhood. The community has matched acquisition money two to one with Conservation Futures Tax funding, private funds and Neighborhood Matching Fund grants. They are ready to build. The site is unusual and therefore needs more development money. It has steep hillsides and the slope must be stabilized. It will not be easy to build, but the public will get a great view park.

8. Greenwood and Eddie McAbee Creekview Trails, Michael McGinn: There are two parts to this proposal. One is the Eddie McAbee entrance to Carkeek Park where the proposal is to make an accessible trail and create viewpoints. This will provide a connection to the Greenwood neighborhood. The second part of the project is a demonstration garden in Sandel Park related to the Pipers Creek watershed.

9. Haller Lake, Jan Woodward: Haller Lake is a recreation lake with access through private yards. There are two street ends that are used by the public, but they are not improved. The community has tried to improve the property but there has been lots of beach erosion. This proposal will stabilize the shoreline, add picnic tables, walkways, access for utilities and native plantings. The community has received a Small and Simple Neighborhood Matching Fund grant for park design. Fifteen public meetings have been held about the project. The Haller Lake Community Club will help maintain the park. 2005 is the 100th anniversary of the Haller Lake plat.

10. Meridian Good Shepherd Center, Mark Blatter: This project is for a new gateway at 50th and Sunnyside into Meridian Park and the Good Shepherd Center. It will provide an accessible route to the center and create visibility and public awareness of the site. Right now the site is largely invisible. The site is eleven and a half acres without good pedestrian access – there is only one paved lit entry. The request is for \$100,000; Historic Seattle donated \$33,000 to the project this month.

11. NE Ballard Pocket Park: This request is for design and development money for the new park at 17th and 63rd in Ballard, acquired during the first round of the Opportunity Fund. The community has a good ability to leverage money. Ballard is a hub urban village with no place for people to go. Teenagers want a place to go with friends and a place for toddlers to go. The goal is to get to a park without crossing a major arterial. The land is an open parcel, that needs to be designed and developed.

12. North Beach Sportsfield, Diana Simmonds: The fifty year North Beach Elementary School legacy is similar to the Olmsted legacy. The school has high WASL scores and excels academically. The school has a 6.9 acre site. This request is for a project to remove 50 to 60 feet of asphalt and create a ballfield. It is Phase 2 of a development plan. Phase 1 raised \$180,000 to improve parts of the playground. This will be an active sportsfield and will be a benefit to all kids. It can host teams from across the City. There is a broad coalition supporting the proposal.

13. 12th Avenue Village, Daniel Mihalyo: This neighborhood has lots of institutions: Seattle University, Yesler Terrace, and Swedish and Providence Hospitals. The goal of the project is to acquire property for a new park along 12th Avenue. Hundreds and hundreds of new housing units have been developed over the last few years. There is broad community support, and action is needed now. The neighborhood is deficient in open space and has had tremendous growth. They will be able to leverage the Opportunity Fund money. The neighborhood needs a community gathering space – there is only a ¼ acre park within the boundaries of the neighborhood. The community has experienced much higher job and housing growth than predicted.

14. Colonnade Park, Justin Vander Pol: This request is to purchase a private in-holding at the top of the park. The park is 7 acres and will have a mountain bike course. This parcel is the only one in the park that is not underneath I-5; the only area that will be able to support natural vegetation. With this parcel, a grand entry into the park could be created. The park is unique, taking urban wasteland and making a mountain biking paradise.

15. Republican Street P-Patch (No representative was able to attend.)

16. Bailey Gatzert School, Susan Lulu: This is perhaps the most diverse school in Seattle. It is located in the central district and serves low income families from housing projects. The playground is the de facto community park. However, the existing design keeps people out. The project is to open up the site, to create welcoming entrances. Also needed are a playfield upgrade, a covered play area and a walking, jogging trail.

17. Mt. Baker Ridge, Jerry Morales: This Park, acquired during the first round of the Opportunity Fund, provides great views to downtown Seattle. The entire park will be a classroom where you can track the equinox. The park will serve more than the immediate neighborhood. The project has great community support, recently raising \$35,000 at an auction. The issues around the existing trees have been resolved. This is a unique design for a unique view property.

18. Powell Barnett Park, Doug Barnett: Doug Barnett, the son of Powell Barnett described his father's legacy of community achievements. The park was developed between 1969 and 1970 and is old now and needs to change. It is underutilized and has crime and the perception of crime. For one and a half years the community has been meeting to resolve the park problems and has developed a good plan. The plan will open sight lines into the park by lowering the existing berms – this will help solve the crime problems. The design also includes an improved entryway, removal of invasives and potential relocation of the restrooms that have become an area of drug activity. The community has worked with the Police Department in developing the plan.

Committee Discussion/Questions to Presenters:

Doug Dunham thanked the presenters for their hard work and opened the meeting up to Committee member discussion and questions to presenters.

12th Avenue Village: A question was raised about the relationship of the future Cultural Center to the request for acquiring a 12th Avenue park. The response stated that Seattle University's development of a 120 unit housing project that included a street vacation required Seattle University to provide \$140,000 for a community space, which could be either a cultural center or open space.

Haller Lake Street End Park: A question was directed to Haller Lake representatives about the community reaction to this project. The representative responded that after the project was denied funding in the first round of the Opportunity Fund the community hired a landscape architect to develop plans and they held a lot of meetings. The plans have been accepted by the community, although there may still be some opposition. People who live on the lake and have their own access don't see the need for the park. Also in response to a question, the representative noted that there is one other public access street end on the lake, which is paved and is used for small boat launching.

Ernst Park Addition: A question was asked regarding the relationship of the property requested for purchase and the development and design of the existing park. The community representative responded that a conceptual design incorporating the additional property has been developed and the property can easily be incorporated into the park. However, there is no funding for development of this property.

School District Property Requests (North Beach, Bailey Gatzert): Regarding these requests for funding projects on Seattle School District property (plus Whitworth in the south end), a question was raised about the likelihood of these schools closing and also a concern regarding public access to public school sites. A representative from Bailey Gatzert responded that there was no chance of Bailey Gatzert closing. The school has a population of 375-400 students. It is in a very mixed cultural neighborhood and access to the school is open (although it is not a welcoming access, which is the subject of the Opportunity Fund request). The gate is always open, but there is no sense that it is open.

The North Beach representative noted that while no school is off the closure table, the high academic standards and strong community support for North Beach make it unlikely for closure. The school has enrollment of 245-250 students. The new playfield design at North Beach does not have a gate. The field will be scheduled by the Park Department for non-school hours.

Another question directed at the school projects was regarding whether they were receiving funds from the School District levy. North Beach responded that they are receiving over \$1 million for building improvements and some exterior improvements. Bailey Gatzert noted that they will receive School District levy funding in 2008 for maintenance and repair, including drainage upgrades for the playfield.

33rd Ave. -- Lake City: A Committee member asked what might happen if the Seattle Housing Authority kept ownership of the Lake City property and the Opportunity Fund money went for park development. The community response was that this would make for a smaller park. SHA has expressed interest in perhaps continuing ownership of the site, but the community is concerned that if there is no public ownership the site might not remain a park. Responding to another question, it was noted that flooding problems at this site have been resolved.

Fremont Peak Park: Responding to a question, Fremont Peak Park's representative commented that no off-street parking is being provided.

The Committee thanked the community for their hard work. The next meeting and open house was set for March 7, and the meeting was adjourned.

Minutes approved at the March 28, 2005 meeting of the Pro Parks Levy Oversight Committee.